

Though the sample was too small to make a positive deduction, the two Peacocks that overwintered out of my company somewhere on the staircase were less amenable to handling. I completely failed to catch one of them in my hands and had to trap it in a plastic box.

After release, the butterflies stayed about two days in my garden before moving elsewhere, spending their time taking nectar and basking. They seemed rather tame, permitting close approach and sometimes coming even nearer of their own accord. One Peacock chose to bask briefly between my feet as I stood watching. Of more interest was the fact that I was "buzzed" on four occasions, too often, in my opinion, for coincidence.

The first was by a Tortoiseshell, about half-an-hour after I had liberated the one by my bedside, and I had seen no other. It flew straight at me and I had to duck to avoid being struck in the face. Later, two Peacocks acted in a similar manner and one of them either brushed my cheek with its wing or caused me to feel the air displaced by its wing-beat. The most interesting incident occurred while I was lunching in the summerhouse; a Peacock came in, flew two tight circles round me then left. Clearly I was the object of its interest.

I was much puzzled by this behaviour, but a friend gave a possible explanation. There may be a human scent that can be detected by insects and after the butterflies had spent four or five months in a room occupied by a man, this smell had become familiar or even attractive to them. It was this that drew them towards me. I shall be interested if a reader can offer an alternative explanation.

My butterflies gave me interest and pleasure over five long winter months and I missed them when they had all departed. My only regret is that there was no painted lady among my bedroom companions.

### **An infestation of *Norellia spinipes* (Mg.) (Dip.: Scathophagidae) on daffodils in a suburban garden in Harrow, Middlesex (VC 21).**

Two males and one female *Norellia spinipes* were found flying in an unheated domestic greenhouse in Harrow on 12 June 1997. Tulip *Tulipa* sp. var. and daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* var. bulbs had been dug up from the garden on 10 June and placed temporarily in a bucket in the greenhouse. Subsequent to the discovery of the fly, the tulips (eight bulbs) and daffodils (approx. 50 bulbs) were separated and placed in a single layer in boxes, outside the greenhouse and at ambient temperature away from direct sunlight. These were inspected at least three times a day and further specimens of *N. spinipes* emerged exclusively from the daffodil bulbs. All but two were recorded in the morning between 06.00 and 08.00 hours, suggesting emergence overnight or in the early morning as is the norm in many species of Diptera. The emergence proceeded as follows :

12-13 June, 1 ♂, 1 ♀	20 June, 1 ♂
13-14 June, 1 ♀	20-21 June, 1 ♀
15-16 June, 1 ♂	23 June, 1 ♂
17-18 June, 1 ♂, 1 ♀	

Inspection was continued until 15 July but no further specimens emerged. In all seven males and five females were obtained from these bulbs, although these figures do not account for any that may have emerged before the bulbs were placed in the greenhouse.

I have one previous record of this species from Middlesex: Brent Reservoir, (OS grid reference TQ 2287), 21 April 1996. A female was swept from an isolated daffodil growing through ground cover of Ivy *Hedera helix* in dense shade in secondary woodland adjacent to Staples Corner.

*N. spinipes*, almost certainly an introduction, was added to the British list on the basis of specimens from Surrey and Buckinghamshire (Chandler, P.J. & Stubbs, A.E. 1969. A species of *Norellia* R.-D. (Dipt., Scathophagidae) new to Britain. *Proceedings and Transactions of the British Entomological and Natural History Society*. **2**: 120-124). Its presence in London is discussed by A. Godfrey (1989, *Norellia spinipes* R.-D. (Diptera: Scatophagidae) in London. *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*. **2**: 63). The occurrence of this species in Middlesex is recorded by K.G.V. Smith & C.R. Vardy (1988, A further British record of *Norellia spinipes* (Meigen) (Scatophagidae), from daffodils in Middlesex. *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. **124**: 242) and more recently by K.G.V. Smith (1996. A further Middlesex locality for *Norellia spinipes* (Mg.) (Dipt., Scatophagidae). *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. **132** 54).

It is not possible to rule out a pre-existing infestation in the bulbs, a white-flowered, non-miniature daffodil var. which were purchased from a commercial nursery in 1995, and for which the original source is unknown. The emergence recorded here is most likely to have occurred as a result of *in situ* oviposition by a single female. This may indicate that *N. spinipes* is extending its range via suburban and domestic gardens where daffodils are a regular feature, although this species almost certainly has alternative host plants.— JOHN R. DOBSON, 46 Elmwood Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8AH.

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### Hazards of butterfly collecting – Trekking into Mkpot 1, Cross River, Nigeria – March 1995

I doubt if you have ever heard of Mkpot 1. Very few people have. The name Mkpot, however, is well entrenched in African butterfly literature. The famous Colonel (Retd.), T.H.E. (Pinkie) Jackson stationed one of his best collectors, Boniface Watulege, there for many months, and he caught a most amazing raft of butterflies. It is 70 kilometres north of Calabar in eastern Nigeria.

But Mkpot 1 is not Mkpot. Some 60 years ago there was a spat at Mkpot, and some villagers decided to leave in a huff. Into the almost impenetrable forest they went, and carved out Mkpot 1. This little village, now prosperous and enlightened by local standards, lies in a clearing of three kilometres radius in the middle of what